

Case Study

Screening of the "Blacks Can't Swim - The Sequel" Documentary for Active Oxfordshire



Introduction

Active Oxfordshire, in partnership with Oxford Hub, successfully hosted two showings of Ed Accura's documentary, "Blacks Can't Swim - The Sequel," as part of the ongoing efforts to tackle the inequalities that exist within swimming in Oxfordshire. This initiative aligned with Active Oxfordshire's commitment to improving access to physical activities for all community members, reflecting the belief in the transformative power of sport and community engagement.

The screenings aimed to foster dialogue and inspire action within the local community, particularly around the pressing issue of racial disparities in swimming participation. By integrating this documentary into our educational agenda, Active Oxfordshire not only fulfilled its social responsibility but also contributed to broader discussions about inclusivity in sports, making it highly relevant to its goals.

The Shocking Facts (Current Key Statistics)

According to a survey conducted in 2024 by **Sport England**, **97% of Black adults and 82% of Black children in England do not swim. 96% of Asian adults and 79% of Asian children in England do not swim.** (Sports England Active Lives Survey 2024)

Black Children are seven times more likely to die from drowning than their White peers, prompting experts to encourage them to learn how to swim. Children from African and Caribbean backgrounds have been held back from learning the life skill because of fears about water, hair protection and financial means which has left them at a greater risk.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that, on average, 236,000 people drown globally every year, with 90% of these deaths occurring in low- to middle-income countries. Africa has the highest drowning rate, while Asia experiences the highest number of drowning incidents.

Benefits to Active Oxfordshire

Engaging with the documentary "Blacks Can't Swim The Sequel" provided Active Oxfordshire with numerous benefits that align with its strategic priorities and focus on inequalities. By hosting the screening, Active Oxfordshire was able to raise awareness about critical inequalities within swimming participation, fostering a shared understanding among a diverse audience. This initiative not only highlighted the organisation's commitment to addressing racial disparities in sports and physical activities but also reinforced its role as a proactive community partner dedicated to creating positive societal change.

Furthermore, the event brought significant benefits to internal staff by fostering engagement and providing valuable insights into the societal challenges faced by underrepresented groups. This experience empowered team members to reflect on their roles in promoting inclusivity and enhance their understanding of the issues at hand, ultimately driving a culture of empathy and awareness within the organisation. Additionally, the collaborative nature of the event strengthened relationships among staff, encouraging them to work together on initiatives that improve access to swimming for all within the community. This collective effort not only enriched the staff's experience but also contributed to the overall mission of Active Oxfordshire, reinforcing the importance of social responsibility at both individual and organisational levels.

Active Oxfordshire's Role

Active Oxfordshire, in partnership with local organisations like Oxford Hub, Radley College and Oxford Community Action stands at the forefront of such initiatives. Working with over 110 partners, Active Oxfordshire focuses on areas of greatest need, promoting physical health, mental well-being, and social connectivity. Together with Sport England, they deliver the "Uniting the Movement" strategy, addressing inequalities within Oxfordshire's communities.

Their screening of the "Blacks Can't Swim" documentary is part of a broader strategy to highlight and amend stark inequalities in swimming proficiency and access for Black and Asian youth compared to their White counterparts.

Testimonial

Josh Lenthall, Chief Executive, shares his perspective: "The screening of the 'Blacks Can't Swim - The Sequel' documentary was a pivotal moment for our county. It provided a focal point to gather individuals from all backgrounds and begin critical conversations. The subsequent co-creation sessions have already started paving the way for actionable change, embodied through initiatives like Ready Set Go."

Conclusion

The screening of the "Blacks Can't Swim - The Sequel" documentary served as a catalyst for positive societal transformation for Active Oxfordshire. By hosting this event, Active Oxfordshire not only raised awareness about critical inequalities in swimming participation but also fostered a shared understanding among a diverse audience. This initiative highlighted the organisation's commitment to addressing racial disparities in sports and physical activities, reinforcing its role as a proactive community partner dedicated to creating positive societal change.

The positive engagement and discussions sparked during the screening underscored the importance of ongoing partnerships between local organisations and community groups to promote drowning prevention and aquatic education. Furthermore, the event encouraged employee engagement by providing valuable insights into the societal challenges faced by underrepresented groups, empowering the team to contribute meaningfully toward initiatives that foster inclusivity and enhance access to swimming for all.

Through such initiatives, organisations like Active Oxfordshire illustrate that collaboration and a steadfast commitment to inclusivity can drive impactful change within the community.

About the Documentaries

The **Blacks Can't Swim** and **Changing the Narrative** documentaries have provided crucial insights into why a disproportionate number of people of African, Caribbean, and Asian heritage do not swim. These documentaries offer valuable perspectives through the lived experiences shared in the films.

These documentaries are essential for anyone who would like to better understand how a lack of diversity and inclusion in aquatics has impacted individuals within ethnically diverse communities. By participating in these screenings, viewers will gain insight into the complex barriers to aquatic engagement, the opportunities and benefits that being able to swim can provide, and how participation can be promoted within African, Caribbean, and Asian communities.

The screenings offer a comfortable and safe environment for individuals to reflect on their views and address these issues. Additionally, the documentaries delve into important topics beyond swimming, exploring mental health, physical health, dietary choices, and other areas that can benefit from aquatic activities.

For organisations or communities aiming to align with their strategic priorities and focus on reducing inequalities, especially those with a diverse workforce, these screenings offer an opportunity to engage with important societal issues and encourage positive change. By fostering discussions around inclusivity and water safety, organisations can contribute to enhancing community well-being and collectively work towards changing the narrative surrounding swimming participation.

If you are interested in hosting your screening, private packages including a Q&A session are available via the details below, furthering the documentary's mission to raise awareness and advocate for inclusion in aquatics regardless of ethnicity.

Contact info@changingthenarrative.film to initiate change in your workplace and community.

Together, we can foster a culture of understanding, safety, and empowerment for all.

For more information, interested parties can visit www.changingthenarrative.film